

Appln. No. 10/643,661

Attorney Docket No. DKT01053

II. Remarks

Claims 1 through 25 are pending in the application. Claims 1 through 14, 19 and 25 have been cancelled. Claims 15 and 21 have been amended. No new claims have been added.

Accordingly, claims 15 through 18 and 20 through 24 remain under consideration.

Rejection Under 35 USC § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 15, 17 through 18, and 20 through 23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Bird, Jr. et al., United States Patent No. 3,666,064 (Bird, Jr.).

Bird, Jr. was described and distinguished in the Amendment filed September 1, 2005 and that discussion is hereby incorporated by reference.

It is apparent that Bird, Jr. does not anticipate nor, given the manifest distinctions between Bird, Jr. and Applicants' claimed device, render the claims obvious.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

Claims 16 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bird, Jr. in view of Baxter, Jr., U.S. Patent No. 5,996,758 (Baxter).

Bird, Jr., as noted, was previously discussed and distinguished in the Amendment filed September 1, 2005 and that text is hereby incorporated in its entirety by reference. Baxter, likewise was discussed and distinguished in the subject Amendment. Such text is herein incorporated by reference.

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Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bird, Jr. in view of Miller, U.S. Patent No. 3,726,373 (Miller).

Miller, also discussed previously, does not cure the defects of the Bird, Jr. reference. Claims 16, 22 and 24 are not obvious and are therefore patentable.

Objected to Claims

The Examiner has objected to claims 19 and 25 and indicated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In order to conclude prosecution on the initially elected claims and pursue patent protection on the remaining embodiments, Applicants' attorney has incorporated the objected to claims in their respective independent claims and submits that claims 15 through 18 and 20 through 24 are therefore patentable.

SUMMARY

Pending Claims 15 through 18 and 20 through 24 as amended, are patentable. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner grant allowance of these claims. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney for the Applicants via telephone if such communication would expedite this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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